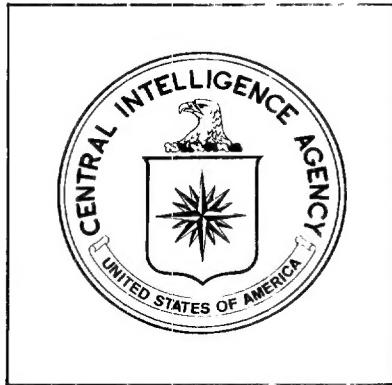


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Chinese Affairs

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*October 28, 1975
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CHINESE AFFAIRS

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the East Asia - Pacific Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence and from the Directorate of Science and Technology. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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The Militia: Changing Roles Again

Since the early 1970s the militia has spent little time sharpening its military skills and instead has been deeply involved with production, political activities and police functions. During the past couple of months, however, there seems to have been a reordering of these priorities. As early as June, Fukien began to emphasize military training for the militia, but in most places this policy did not emerge in full view until September and October.

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Central Directive 18 has inspired a broad effort to upgrade the military proficiency of both the urban and rural militia. Provincial militia conferences have been held in a few places. The conference in Kwangtung, for instance, was addressed by fairly senior provincial party and military district leaders who stressed the need to prepare for war and implement the "latest important instructions" of Mao and the Central Committee. Underscoring these themes, participants at the conference were taken to observe a demonstration of antiaircraft gunnery given by the militia of a number of Canton factories. The meeting's final document and the accompanying *Southern Daily* editorial were replete with references to the need for raising military proficiency.

On the anniversary of Mao's 1958 call for militia building, other provinces likewise have emphasized in their media treatment the military role of the militia. For instance, in Hopei the militia was given training in anti-tank warfare, while in Liaoning the emphasis was on repelling enemy landings and house-to-house combat.

This renewed emphasis on military affairs does not mean that the militia's police and production

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functions have been dropped completely. They are now, however, played less prominently in the press. Whereas since the organization of the urban militia in fall, 1973, Shanghai has been held up as a national model for enforcing the dictatorship of the proletariat, in recent broadcasts there is scant mention of Shanghai in discussing militia affairs.

This change in the militia's functions may not stem solely from Peking's revised view of military priorities as enshrined in Directive 18, but could also reflect disenchantment with the performance of the urban militia during the past months. In attempting to control worker unrest this summer, in some places the militia itself became embroiled in the factionalism and had to be disbanded. Indeed, this is one of the reasons Peking was forced to send the PLA into Chekiang. Deeply suspicious of any enlargement of the PLA's role in civil affairs, Peking at this point may have no choice but to strengthen the Public Security Bureau. While the bureau has been rebuilt down to the local levels, it does not appear currently to have regained its pre - Cultural Revolution authority.

If the past is any guide to the present, it is likely that the decision to give the militia a more important place in China's defense was not taken without controversy. During the past decade or so the militia has been a contentious issue within China's leadership, raising questions about allocation of military resources, control and defense strategy. Throughout this period there have always been important elements within the military establishment that have opposed assigning the militia a larger role. In the mid-1960s then chief of staff Lo Jui-ching argued for a conventional force defense of China in the event of attack and objected strongly to the notion of a people's war which assigned a vital role to the militia. This was probably a factor

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in Lo's purge. In the late 1960s Lin Piao, apparently under strong pressures from within the military, allowed militia training to languish. Finally, in mid-1973 when the organization of the urban militia was under consideration, the PLA made its position clear in the pages of the *Liberation Army Daily* by arguing against such an expanded role.

It is not difficult to see why a decision to emphasize military training would generate misgivings in the military establishment, particularly among strong advocates of a modernized army. Not only does it tend to reduce the importance of the PLA regular forces in China's defense, but it has been made quite clear in the media that the militia will remain under strict party, rather than military, control. In addition it seems likely that such a training program will tend to draw down the PLA's own resources. Although there have been indications in the press that Peking wants militia units to rely on their own resources, this may be too much to ask. In Szechuan, for example, regular army units have already been used to assist the militia in training.

If opposition exists within the military, it probably carries little weight. While it is still too early to reach any firm judgments, the national and provincial press have given little hint of opposition to this larger military role for the militia. It may be that such a role was one of the concessions which the military modernizers, Lo Jui-ching included, had to make in order to push through the other reforms contained in Central Directive 18. (SECRET NOFORN)

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A Cautious Look at Portuguese Timor

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With one eye focused carefully on Jakarta, the Chinese press and Foreign Ministry have cautiously taken note of the situation in Portuguese Timor, commenting publicly on the colony for the first time since Lisbon began its decolonization program last year.

Although Peking's sympathies clearly lie with the leftist Fretilin, which advocates immediate independence, the Chinese have not directly criticized other groups in the colony, one of which is closely identified with Jakarta's desire to incorporate Portuguese Timor into Indonesia. A brief NCNA broadcast on October 14 depicted Fretilin as having the support of "most of the people" in the colony and pointed up the rebels' recent military gains.

The same broadcast also referred--without explicit criticism--to Indonesian Foreign Minister Malik's publicly expressed "hope" that East Timor would join Indonesia and to foreign press accounts of Indonesian "attacks" on the colony earlier in the month.

that Fretilin representatives had sought Chinese military and economic assistance during recent meetings with Chinese officials in Australia and Mozambique. Implying a rejection of the Fretilin request, it noted that the situation in Timor was very unstable and China should not commit itself too rapidly in order not to tarnish its image of non-interference in Timor's internal affairs. Evidence of Soviet meddling in Timor, on the other hand, should be exposed if it is uncovered,

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Chinese leaders recognize that overt support of Fretilin would seriously jeopardize their long-standing efforts to improve official relations with Indonesia. The Chinese almost certainly realize that any direct involvement in Timor would play directly into the hands of elements in Indonesia--especially in the military--who oppose improved relations with Peking out of fear of Chinese "expansionism."

3 The status of Lisbon's other enclave in East Asia, Macao, probably has contributed to Chinese caution on the Timor question. Peking considers Macao to be Chinese territory "temporarily" occupied by the Portuguese and wants no immediate change in the colony's status. The Chinese are especially opposed to any notion of an independent Macao and supported the colonial government's removal from the colony of a handful of Portuguese leftists who advocated independence earlier in the year.

For these reasons, the Chinese can be expected to continue to play down future developments in Timor, avoiding positions that could undermine Peking's efforts to improve ties with Jakarta or its preference for a continuation of the status quo in Macao. (SECRET NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/ORCON)

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Commemorating the Long March

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The unprecedented media attention which Peking has given to the 40th anniversary of the Long March harbors a curious mixture of accolade for the PLA as a whole and admonition for certain elements within the military establishment. With the winding down of the anti-Confucius campaign in mid-1974, public criticism of the PLA has been substantially reduced, but now the Central seems to have gone a step further by endeavoring to polish the army's image. The joint *People's Daily* - *Liberation Army Daily* editorial spared few superlatives in glorifying the Red Army, precursor of the PLA. High-ranking military men from the region and district levels were accorded prominent roles in the provincial celebrations, and veteran cadres were called upon to recount their experiences of the Long March. Many of these military figures had a hard time of it during the Cultural Revolution, and the festivities seemed to be Peking's way of welcoming them back to the fold.

If the Central simply sought to use the Long March to renovate reputations and images, it could have accomplished this without discussing in some detail the issue of dissident lines within the army during the 1934-35 trek. In fact, the joint editorial, the reprint of Liu Po-cheng's 1959 article, and all but a couple of provincial accounts of the celebrations focused on the victory of Mao's line over those of Wang Ming and Chang Kuo-tao. The editorial, which presents the most authoritative exposition, labels the factions headed by Wang and Chang during the Long March as "revisionist/capitulationist." It goes on to lecture that the march was successful only because these dissidents were defeated by Mao's revolutionary line and urges persistent opposition to capitulationists today.

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The term "capitulationism" appeared from time to time during the anti-Confucius campaign in connection with Lin Piao's alleged sympathy for reconciliation with the Soviet Union. Capitulation to the Soviets has also been a major theme in the current movement to study the novel "Water Margin." By raising the issue again in the context of discussing factionalism within the military, albeit historical, Peking seems to be admonishing certain elements within the PLA high command who are suspected of favoring some measure of accommodation with the Soviet Union. Indeed, [redacted]

[redacted] in talking confidentially about military leaders with strong political impulses, recently commented that "there are still plenty of them (Lin Piao elements) about." He went on to say, however, that the bulk of the army was solidly behind the administration.

This view fits well with the press treatment of the Long March which seems to reassure the PLA as a whole while pointing the finger at certain suspect elements. While Peking provides few hints as to whom these individuals might be, it does appear to suggest that nothing dramatic will be done about them, at least for the present. The Long March editorial as well as the provincial press, in speaking of current priorities, encapsulates them in "Chairman Mao's three directives." These make it clear that stability and unity in the interest of economic growth are equally important as "combating revisionism."
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Sino-Japanese Oil Pact Negotiations

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The first stage of Sino-Japanese negotiations for a long-term oil pact ended in late September with the Japanese offering to buy quantities of crude oil well below the production capability anticipated by the Chinese. According to the tentative agreement, Japan's purchases would increase nominally next year to 172,000 barrels per day from the 156,000 barrels per day contracted for this year. The quantity would then increase by 86,000 barrels per day each year, with the possibility of a "balloon" increase in 1980 that could bring the total to 576,000 barrels per day. Peking had earlier discussed exports of 1,000,000 barrels per day.

Japan was scheduled to send a high-level delegation to Peking on October 21 for further talks. A final pact will not be signed until differences over price and Japanese proposals for reciprocal Chinese purchases of oil equipment are settled. Peking, initially at least, is rejecting Japanese demands for lowering the \$12.10 a barrel price charged in 1975 contracts to "a price competitive with Mid-East oil." The two sides have agreed that equipment purchases will be straight commercial deals without Japanese participation in the Chinese oil industry.

3 | Peking wanted to sell nearly all of its exportable crude to Japan through 1980. This tentative agreement reflects China's acceptance of market realities. With world oil in ample supply, guaranteed markets for annually increasing quantities of Chinese crude are hard to find because of its high price, paraffin content and high transport costs.

3 | Peking undoubtedly is intensifying efforts to find alternative markets for its crude oil. Other Asian markets such as the Philippines and Thailand

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3 | are small, and possible sales to Western Europe or the US are unlikely as long as Peking's prices and transport costs remain noncompetitive.

2 | Peking may now look more kindly on proposals to channel crude to refineries to be built in locations along China's periphery. For example, exploratory talks have taken place for a 200,000 barrel per day refinery and petrochemical plant to be built in Macao by Sumitomo Shoji Kaisha of Japan. Chinese communists in Hong Kong have asked Singapore oil companies to process Chinese crude, with the resulting products to be returned to the Chinese. (SECRET NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/WNINTEL)

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Shanghai Leads in Rapid Expansion of China's
Petrochemical Industry

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Petrochemical production in Shanghai will soon take on major importance as the large integrated petrochemical complex nears completion. Chinese news media have trumpeted the rapid completion of this project in a number of recent press releases. The core of the project is a dozen foreign-built plants in a production chain which focuses on the output of fibers and plastics. The complex was completed in only twenty-one months.

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The Chinese recently revealed still another large petrochemical complex under construction in South China near Canton. Recently developed oil fields in that area reportedly will provide feedstocks, and foreign firms probably will provide the bulk of the plant and equipment. Very few details on the status of this project have yet become available to us.

Expansion of the oil industry in recent years has made possible the rapid growth of the petrochemical industry. China has ample oil and gas for feedstock, and growing oil exports have eased the problem of buying foreign petrochemical plants and technology.

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CHRONOLOGY

October 10 Congolese military delegation arrives in Peking. (U)

October 12 Singapore trade delegation departs for China to promote trade ties between the two countries. (U)

October 13 Chinese charge Hsiao Te arrives in Manila to set up Chinese embassy in the Philippines. (U)

 Spokesman for Chinese Foreign Ministry issues "statement" rebuking US for allowing Tibet independence activities in the United States. (U)

October 14 Secretary general of the UN Conference on Trade and Development arrives in Peking for an eight-day visit. (U)

 Official delegation from Bahrain arrives in Peking for a four-day visit. (U)

October 15 Brazilian parliamentary delegation begins official visit to China. (U)

October 15 - 20 National Conference on Learning from Tachai holds concluding session; Hua Kuo-feng delivers summing-up speech. (U)

October 16 New scientific and technical protocol signed with Albania. (U)

 Madame Mariam Traore, wife of Malian head of state, arrives in Peking for a five-day visit; meets with Mao on October 19. (U)

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October 16 Japanese economic delegation arrives in Peking; meets with Foreign Trade Minister Li Chiang on October 17 and with Liao Cheng-chih, president of the China-Japan Friendship Association, on October 21.

October 17 Party delegation headed by central committee member Chang Ping-hua departs for Romania. (U)

October 18 New scientific and technical protocol signed with Czechoslovakia. (U)
 Trade protocol signed with Guinea. (U)

October 19 China observes 40th anniversary of completion of Long March; *People's Daily* and *Liberation Army Daily* publish joint editorial. (U)

October 19 - 23 Secretary Kissinger visits China; meets with Chairman Mao on October 21. (U)

October 20 Chinese Charge Lu Tzu-po arrives in Bangkok to establish Chinese embassy in Thailand. (U)

October 21 Shipping agreement signed with Algeria. (U)
 Trade delegation from Guyana arrives in Peking. (U)
 New scientific and technical protocol signed with Yugoslavia. (U)

October 23 Royalty from Nepal arrive in China for official visit. (U)

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October 24 Chinese "friendship delegation" arrives in Pyongyang to attend ceremonies marking 25th anniversary of the entry of Chinese "volunteers" into the Korean War. (U)

Military delegation headed by deputy chief of general staff Ho Cheng-wen departs for Sweden. (U)

October 27 China conducts underground nuclear test at Lop Nor center. (U)

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Angola and Rhodesia: An Overview

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Peking's adoption in the early 1970s of a flexible, pragmatic foreign policy emphasizing good state-to-state relations brought to a virtual halt Chinese support for subversive activities against incumbent black African governments --an activity that was in general decline in any case. Peking, however, was able to retain a revolutionary aura for its African policy by continuing to support black nationalist efforts to depose white minority governments in southern Africa. The Chinese were also seeking to expand their African contacts with an eye to limiting Soviet influence throughout the region and saw their involvement with the liberation movements as a means of gaining stock with black African leaders--who were and still are united in their opposition to white rule in the south.

Of the three most important areas of confrontation in 1970--Mozambique, Angola, and Rhodesia--a settlement has been achieved only in Mozambique. In Rhodesia the basic white-black conflict remains unchanged, but major differences have emerged among interested black governments and the liberation leaders themselves over the best tactics for ending white rule in Salisbury. In Angola the contrast between the start of the decade and the present is even more dramatic: the movement to replace Portuguese colonialism has evolved into a civil war among black Angolans.

Early Misgivings in Angola

Although its involvement with the Angolan liberation movements goes back to the early 1960s, Peking probably long had misgivings about its role. In

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varying degrees, all the liberation movements in southern Africa were rent by internal rivalries that undermined the effort to overthrow white or colonial rule. These problems, however, were particularly acute in Angola, where even in the mid-60s the three major liberation groups spent as much of their energies skirmishing with each other as they did fighting the Portuguese. In these circumstances, Peking avoided continuing obligations to any of the three, shifting its support to first one and then the other group, sometimes aiding all three simultaneously, and reviewing the results of each individual infusion on the political and military activities of the recipient. Although by the early 1970s Agostinho Neto's Popular Movement (MPLA) had emerged as the most effective and widely recognized organization, Peking grew increasingly disenchanted with the MPLA's close ties with Moscow and in 1973 cut off its contacts. Holden Roberto's National Front (FNLA) began receiving the bulk of Chinese assistance while Jonas Savimbi's National Union (UNITA) continued to receive occasional financial support from Peking. This policy also related well to Chinese efforts to curry favor with Zaire's Mobutu and Zambia's Kaunda--backers of FNLA and UNITA respectively.

The Chinese reacted cautiously to the Alvor agreement of January 1975, whereby the three contending Angolan groups agreed to participate in a transition government, and Lisbon set November 11 as the date for Angolan independence. Publicly Peking lauded the agreement--Chou En-lai even sent his personal congratulations to the three leaders--and the Chinese no doubt hoped the truce would stick, since it enjoyed a measure of influence with two of the three groups which theoretically at least stood an equal chance of solidifying their position in an elected post-liberation government. Moreover, with Lisbon's unilateral decision to decolonize, Peking's "revolutionary" approach to the Angolan situation ceased to have much

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relevance. A peaceful transition to independence would allow Peking to ease out of its special relationship with UNITA and particularly with FNLA and develop a new Angolan policy more in line with the realities of the situation.

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Ten years of dealings with the mutually antagonist Angolan groups, however, undoubtedly suggested to Peking that the odds favored its early collapse. As a result, Peking felt compelled to continue to provide training and equipment for FNLA units so as to assure their military capabilities should full-scale hostilities begin with MPLA. Reports of FNLA dissatisfaction with the level of assistance and of Chinese reluctance to provide more support suggest that Peking was trying not to increase FNLA capabilities to the point where Holden Roberto of his own accord would be tempted to opt for a military feud with MPLA.

Sliding Downhill

Developments in Angola since mid-year have probably exceeded Peking's darkest fears. When it became obvious early in the summer that increased Soviet arms deliveries had tipped the military balance in favor of MPLA, Peking apparently tried to forestall a total collapse in Luanda by inviting an MPLA delegation to Peking and offering to "reassess" Chinese support for all three groups if the tripartite status quo were maintained. When this effort failed and MPLA unleashed its freshly equipped units against both FNLA and UNITA, Peking responded by stepping up its shipments to FNLA via Zaire and by attempting to work through Zambia and Tanzania to provide increased support to UNITA.

While renewed arms deliveries and direct Zairian military intervention have averted a total military victory for MPLA, Peking's clients are still in precarious positions. Despite its recent battlefield

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successes, for example, FNLA has little prospect of regaining all the military and political ground it has lost since mid-year. Even if it does, the rivalry between the two major groups has grown so unyielding that a new rapprochement appears virtually unattainable. UNITA has always been a relatively impotent military force, staying in the game by virtue of the tribal support it receives in the area it controls. UNITA's prospects appear linked to Savimbi's willingness to formally ally himself with either of the other two groups--a move which could still be decisive--but so far he appears determined to maintain his independence. Under these circumstances, MPLA will almost certainly continue to hold all the advantages when the Portuguese pull out next month, and Peking's chances for future influence in Angola will remain shaky.

On the regional level, moreover, Peking's Angolan connections have shown signs of becoming significant irritants in state-to-state relations. Tanzanian President Nyerere, for example, has embargoed a recent shipment of Chinese arms to UNITA and has privately blasted Peking for letting the Sino-Soviet rivalry in Angola take precedence over the interests of the Angolan people (see *Chinese Affairs*, September 29, 1975). Nyerere is a long-time supporter of MPLA but, if recent African speeches at the UN are any indication, even those African leaders who are not closely connected with any of the contending Angolan groups are taking a similarly dim view of external involvement of any sort in Angola. Support for FNLA and UNITA still gains Peking points with Zaire and Zambia to be sure, but such returns would be largely vitiated if a wider African backlash develops. Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua in his own UN speech last month appeared to reflect concern for the potential damage to Peking's image when he blamed the Soviets and the US for using Angola as an ideological battlefield and tried somewhat lamely to portray China's treatment of the Angolans as "even-handed."

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Running Out of Options

As things now stand there appears to be little the Chinese can do to shore up their position in Angola. Peking could, of course, cut its losses by ending its involvement altogether or by switching its support to MPLA in hopes of eventually weaning it away from Moscow. From its talks with the MPLA delegation in Peking this summer, however, the Chinese know that the latter would be a poor gamble. Abandoning FNLA and UNITA would cede dominant influence in Angola to Moscow, and such a Chinese default in the Sino-Soviet rivalry while there still exists a chance of retrieving the situation is clearly unthinkable in Peking. The Chinese have also apparently discarded the option of stepping up their military assistance, probably recognizing that, as other outside powers such as South Africa have begun to provide military assistance, the military shortcomings of FNLA and UNITA are now more the result of training and severe logistic problems than arms shortages per se.

For the short term at least, Peking thus appears to have little choice but to play out its string in Angola. The Chinese can be expected to continue to help keep FNLA and UNITA afloat and to lend their support to efforts at political compromise. Peking will probably use its leverage with regional governments and with its Angolan clients to promote African reconciliation attempts such as the current undertaking by the Organization for African Unity. Although they have almost no leverage in Lisbon, the Chinese may also take what steps they can to encourage the Portuguese not to leave the MPLA in de facto control of Angola on November 11. Peking might even see some merit in a Portuguese move to involve the UN in a peace-keeping role, although it would almost certainly not take the lead in seeking such international intervention.

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Nevertheless, Peking by now probably reckons that the chances are dim for anything but continued fighting in the post-liberation period and that China will be facing hard decisions regarding Angola in the near future. Indeed, the possibility that FNLA and UNITA may establish a rival regime or regimes and that Peking might be drawn into a prolonged insurgency in Angola may already be creating heartburn in Peking. For the moment, however, the Chinese appear to be hoping that some eleventh-hour solution will present itself and that they will be able to salvage something from a situation that has gone sour on all fronts.

* * *

For the Chinese the situation in Rhodesia continues to embody opportunities that have ceased to exist in Angola. The cause of majority rule in Rhodesia still enjoys the support of all black Africa, and Peking's revolutionary approach--though controversial--remains relevant. Moreover, the Chinese recognize that so far as the Sino-Soviet rivalry for long-term influence in southern Africa is concerned, the stakes in Rhodesia are much higher than in Angola. Peking clearly believes that the days of white rule in Salisbury are numbered and that whoever has the ear of the future rulers there will have an instrumental role in shaping the eventual outcome throughout the region.

Peking dabbled with the Rhodesian liberation movement in the early 1960s, but its active involvement began in 1964 when it became the major supporter for the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), composed of urban intellectuals who had broken away from the Soviet-backed Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). While never numerically as strong as their Angolan counterparts, the Rhodesian groups were just as given to debilitating factional squabbling, and Peking probably discounted ZANU's ability

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to mount effective military or political actions against Salisbury in the near term. But immediate progress in Rhodesia itself was far less important to Peking in the mid-60s than the opportunity to compete with the Soviets for influence both in the liberation movement and with presidents Nyerere and Kaunda--who at the time played host to all African liberation groups no matter what the ideological complexions.

With exclusive and consistent political and financial support from Peking, ZANU by the early 1970s had emerged as the most militarily active of the two major liberation groups operating outside Rhodesia. Peking made no secret of its satisfaction with ZANU raids in rural areas of northeastern Rhodesia in 1972 and 1973, publicly stressing the importance of the "armed struggle" and rewarding now deceased ZANU leader Chitepo with a visit to China. Following the Portuguese coup in April 1974, Peking stepped up its arms deliveries to ZANU and urged its clients to expand their guerrilla operations, arguing that coupled with the dwindling Portuguese role in Mozambique, this would greatly increase the pressure on Salisbury to reach an accommodation with the black nationalists.

Temporary Setbacks

Chinese satisfaction with Rhodesian developments turned to dismay early this year as Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana, and soon-to-be independent Mozambique--all working in concert with Pretoria--succeeded in forcing ZANU and ZAPU to unite under the aegis of the African National Council (ANC), to halt guerrilla operations, and to agree to talks with Salisbury. The prospect of negotiations alone was probably not overly disturbing to Peking. Black nationalists within Rhodesia had occasionally talked with Ian Smith's government over the years, and the Chinese had remained relatively silent on the subject. The decision by the black African leader to force a merger of the liberation groups,

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to pursue exclusively political tactics, and to cooperate with the South Africans, did, however, cut entirely the wrong way from Peking's view. The strength of ZANU lay in its military capabilities, and ZANU leaders would inevitably take the back seat to more politically adroit ANC figures in any negotiations. Moreover, Peking's influence with ZANU itself stood to suffer as the enforced military inactivity diminished the dependence on Chinese assistance. On a broader plane, the move by the black African leaders represented a rejection of Peking's revolutionary approach in Rhodesia and--so far as the black leaders' willingness to cooperate with Pretoria was concerned--throughout the region.

The Chinese did little to hide their feelings over the new initiative. Chinese media kept up steady criticism through last spring and summer stressing that "talks must be based on fighting" and that "while negotiations (were) a form of struggle, armed struggle must not be given up." Peking also made strong diplomatic presentations to Lusaka--which had closed down all the Chinese operated training bases in Zambia to assure compliance with the ceasefire--creating strains on Sino-Zambian relations (see *Chinese Affairs*, May 27, 1975), and it apparently applied similar heat to the Tanzanians. At the same time, however, Peking was careful to limit the damage to such carefully and expensively constructed relations, acceding rather quickly, for example, to a demand that it stop bypassing the ANC structure by continuing to provide direct assistance to former ZANU leaders.

Getting Back on Track

Since the breakdown of talks between Salisbury and the black nationalists in late August, events in Rhodesia have begun to play into Peking's hand again. Nyerere and Mozambique's Samora Machel may have come around to the view that Salisbury's

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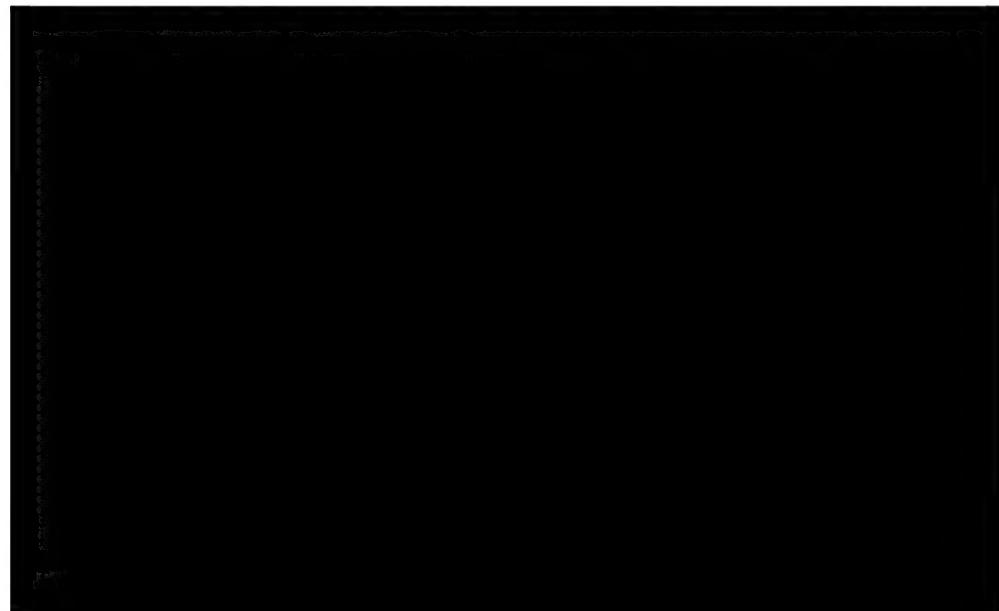
1) resistance to change can only be worn down by resumed guerrilla operations--or at least the threat of renewed military pressure. With the serious factional splits in the ANC in recent weeks, these two leaders reportedly are backing the militant external group--composed mostly of former ZANU members. The militants have been given approval to establish several new bases along Mozambique's border with Rhodesia. Peking has long enjoyed dominant influence in both Dar es Salaam and Lourenco Marques and, having formally agreed this summer to meet all ANC requirements for training and equipment, may well be in a position to close out any Soviet role with the guerrillas whatsoever.

1) 15 While China's approach to the Rhodesian question is once again convergent with its interest in maintaining good relations with Tanzania and Mozambique, Zambia's position still remains troublesome to Peking. With the closure earlier this year of the Benguela railroad through Angola, Zambia copper exports have dropped dramatically and Lusaka is hoping that successful negotiations between Salisbury and black Rhodesian nationalists will enable Zambia to begin using rail lines through Rhodesia again. As a result, Kaunda has continued to hold a hard line against guerrilla use of Zambian soil and is apparently promoting the efforts of the less radical ANC faction--headed by former ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo--to maintain a dialogue with Ian Smith. While there is little likelihood that the Chinese will ever condone Kaunda's conservative policy, Peking does appear willing to make allowances for the difficult circumstances the Zambians face. The Chinese media, for example, have conspicuously avoided any references to the failure of the Victoria Falls talks in August in obvious deference to the sensitivities of Kaunda, who had staked considerable personal prestige on a successful outcome. Similarly, Chinese officials made a show of public harmony with Alexander Grey Zulu, the secretary general of Zambia's ruling party, when

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1415 | he visited Peking last month although differences were reportedly aired behind the scenes.

The Chinese can be expected to keep a weather eye on developments regarding Rhodesia and, with their recent experiences--including those in Angola --firmly in mind, take care to anticipate shifts in regional political currents and any potential openings for Moscow. Peking can be expected to continue pushing the "armed struggle," believing that China's influence over the black nationalists is directly related to their dependence on Chinese assistance. Faced again with concerted African attitudes, however, the Chinese could come to support a negotiated settlement provided that the military option is kept fresh and Peking's clients are assured a strong voice in the bargaining. In his UN speech, Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua appeared to hold out this possibility by saying that while "armed struggle is fundamental ...we have always advocated the use of revolutionary dual tactics (talk/fight)" in Rhodesia. (SECRET NO-FORN/ORCON/NOCONTRACT)



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